Extrasolar Planets:
Worlds of Opportunity for Education and Public Outreach

Doris Daou
Virtual Planetary Laboratories
Infrared Processing and Analysis Center/Caltech
MS: 100-22
Pasadena, CA 91125
U.S.A.
daou@ipac.caltech.edu

Edna DeVore
Co-I Kepler, SOFIA, and NAI EPO
SETI Institute
515 North Whisman Road
Mountain View, CA 94043
U.S.A.

W. Michael Greene
PlanetQuest-Navigator Program
Jet Propulsion Laboratory
M/S: 301-451
Pasadena, CA 91109-8099
U.S.A.

Alan Gould
Co-I, Kepler EPO Program
Lawrence Hall of Science
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720-5200
U.S.A.

The search for life beyond Earth motivates astrobiology research and NASA Missions, and is central in the NASA vision for space exploration. The fundamental research programs within the NAI inform the objectives and design of instruments for future NASA missions within the solar system and the space-based observatories that will search for evidence of habitable planets in orbit about distant stars. The public is readily interested in understanding how NAI scientists explore Earth to inform how we can search for life on Mars and elsewhere in the solar system. NASA's plan to search for habitable worlds beyond our solar system is equally engaging. NAI research and Education and Public Outreach (EPO) program are a part of these larger endeavors. In collaboration with NASA's SOFIA, Spitzer, Hubble, Kepler and PlanetQuest Missions, NAI Education and Public Outreach programs are engaging students, teachers and the public in the search for life beyond earth. Diverse NAI EPO projects and activities leverage their outreach through these collaborative projects which include "Alien Worlds: The Search for Life Beyond Earth", a traveling science center exhibit, and upcoming planetarium programs and television productions. The larger space-based mission EPO projects are willing partners in these collaborations, and expand to potential reach and

impact of the EPO projects which communicate astrobiology research and discoveries to students, teachers, and the public. This presentation illustrates how NASA missions and their EPO programs are in continuous collaboration in serving and educating the public.